

IN FOCUS

The Story of Adele H.

Rob Mack

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The *Story of Adele H.* is this weekend's film. The UC Board presentation will be shown at 7 and 9 on Friday in UC 107, the same times Saturday evening in Commons 102, and at 7 only on Sunday in UC 107. It may be late, but this is a *Valentine* of a picture — a bizarre, quirky tale of passion with a heartbreaking performance by the beautiful, spirited and clever Isabelle Adjani and loving direction by one of the living masters of the cinema, François Truffaut.

The story is based on the diary of the daughter of French laureate Victor Hugo. Adele, in 1863, went to Halifax, Canada in pursuit of a young British soldier who had courted her but left her when her father discouraged the couple's plans for marriage. The lieutenant's defenses and indifference intensified Adele's passion; by the time she left Halifax, approximately a year after she arrived, to follow the man to Barbados, she had become a pathetic sight in the otherwise placid streets. Adele drove herself mad — she spent the rest of her days in seclusion, writing her remembrances in her invented code language until her death in 1915. Filmed in a brusque series of episodes, the picture contradictorily conveys a sweeping feeling of love, madness and personal tragedy. It is a sad, uncommon

national period melodrama — hurtless the audience into the deepest, darkest reaches of passion and madness as well as into a distinctly more modern form of drama, and the effect of its complex structure is searing. Truffaut keeps the drama unambiguous, and thus it is at once intellectually lucid and emotionally powerful.

The picture revolves around Adele, and thus it is dominated equally by the director and the youthful French actress Isabelle Adjani. She is brilliant; she has an honesty which enables her to convey her character's emotional subtleties and depths. The vexed, valiant heroine, the last mad muse of the romantic era, becomes the harbinger of the modern woman who is determined to husband her own resources of passion through the actress's ferocious performance. She brings a seething agony to the slow corrosion of beauty, the angularity of suffering, the fading humanity as her near-demonic possession overwhelms her. And Adjani photographs extraordinarily well; the camera dwells on the various planes of her face with a devotion to the light of her personal intelligence and drive which glows up from underneath her skin. For me, she is prettiest when, captured by passion, she masquerades as a man in order to confront the lieutenant; the moment when she lets her hair down is hypnotically, innocently seductive. I called Isabelle Adjani's performance the best of the calendar year 1975, and my opinion is not diminished after viewing the film a third time.



and strangely involving experience.

Trauffaut's direction is sharply-tuned; the story's passion is the director's theme, his vision and his kinetic power. All the complex, sustaining symmetries of the director's volume of work are both elaborated and contained by this picture. Truffaut's films, almost always interesting unto themselves, are even more interesting when viewed in relation to his other films; but within this single film, something comparable occurs. A commonplace shot or image may take on, from its context, a unique significance. Unlike some of his other recent films, *Adele H.* is marked by an enormous sense of restraint, but the violence of the film's emotional impact is shocking. This romance — which could so easily have evolved as conven-

The Story of Adele H. is a peculiar picture, particularly thematically — at once romantic and skeptical, it refuses to shy away from its crazier implications, yet it never wanders in search of any superfluous excitement. The joy of viewing the film stems from the pleasure of seeing two extraordinary talents giving their all to a story which lacks any identifiable, sensible suspense, yet which is totally suspenseful and sensitive. It may seem dull to those only absorbed by the cinema's vicious or vicious elements; but, if caught when the viewer is open to it, *The Story of Adele H.* is tremendously powerful, both cinematically and emotionally.

Kate Millet

Kate Millett, a prominent leader in the feminist movement and the intellectual community will be speaking at Drew, on Thursday, Feb. 24 at eight o'clock pm in U.C. 107. Jointly sponsored by the Women's Collective and the Academic Forum, Ms. Millett will be speaking on sex, literature and politics. She is the renowned author of *Sexual Politics* and *Flying*.

The Women's Collective will be sponsoring a women's in the arts weekend at the end of March. But we need help, especially with organizing a local art show and a coffeehouse. If you're interested, come to the next Women's Collective meeting or contact Sherry Sanborne, Maryann Chopp, or Cathy Stamm through campus mail. Please lend your talents and creativity.



WERD News

As of Monday, February 14, 1977, WERD began broadcasting for the spring semester. Under the new direction of Rick Bjorkman, WERD is looking forward to a productive and enjoyable season. This semester we have added the Wednesday night special, which will be from eight to ten p.m. These specials will consist of interviews done by various DJ's on our staff. So don't forget to listen to WERD, 590 on your AM dial.

SCHEDULE:**MONDAY**

a.m.	Matt Adams	10-12	Bill Schmidt
2-4	Marita Finsie	12-2	Rip Pellaton
	Cheryl Maltz		
4-6	Rick Bjorkman		
6-8	Dave New		
8-10	Graham Crackers		
10-12	Dave Braunstein		
12-2	Mike Pickman		

TUESDAY

Johnson
Rubin Castellano

Doug Sprei, Steve Casey
John Blossom (blossom)
Bob Dark
John Macarelli

WEDNESDAY

Mike Saxon

Phil Levy
Doug Dempsey
SPECIALS
Jeff Eirich
John Gross

THURSDAY

a.m. Dean Trulear
2-4 Jim Greene
4-6 Aileen Krikoryan
6-8 Jesse Anthony,
Karen Kalfian
8-10 Larry Arrington

FRIDAY

a.m. Johnson
2-4 Jim Covell
4-6 Neil Rush
6-8 Sue Weinberg,
Lisa Peterson
8-10 Tom Gibson
10-12 Ed Gorham,
Chuck Redfern
12-2 Wendi Doyle,
Laurie Pine

SATURDAY

a.m. Laura Becker,
Wayne Fonteix
2-4 Tom Williams
4-6 Howard Mangel
6-8 Tom Riti
8-10 Glenn Cochran
10-12 Robin Adams

SUNDAY

a.m. Dave Freidenrich
2-4 Pat Beaty
4-6 Sue Kitzen
6-8 John Selfridge
10-12 Terry Lukens